

Appl. No. 10/091,380
Amdt. dated November 18, 2003
Reply to Office Action of July 22, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 11-24, 25 are pending in this application with claim 24 being amended.

In the Office Action, claim 24 was said to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Therefore, claim 24 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 11. It is respectfully submitted that claim 24 is now in condition for allowance.

Claims 11-13, 16, 18-29, 21 and 25 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Maue et al (US 5,785,532) for the reasons stated in the Office Action.

The present claimed invention recites an instrument panel for a motor vehicle comprising at least one electronic component which is arranged on a carrier and/or one plug part. Electrical leads are conductively connected to the electronic component and/or the plug part. The carrier (3, 10, 19) has protruding contact pins (6, 13, 22, 23) which are connected to the electronic component (4, 11, 21) and/or to the plug part (14, 20). The electrical leads (7, 15, 24) are attached to the contact pins (6, 13, 22, 23).

Maue et al disclose a power distribution box extending through a bulkhead of an automotive vehicle. Figure 3 of Maue et al illustrates an "instrument panel for a motor vehicle comprising at least one electronic component which is arranged on a carrier". Furthermore, Figure 3 of Maue et al illustrates "electrical leads which are conductively connected to the electronic component", and the "carrier" has "protruding contact pins". However, Maue et al neither disclose nor suggest that "the electrical leads are attached to the contact pins" as in the present claimed invention. Additionally, in Figure 2, Maue et al disclose electrical leads 80 connected to plugs 26. However, Maue et al neither disclose nor suggest that these plugs 26 are connected to the printed circuit board (Figure 3, element 114). Furthermore, Maue et al neither disclose nor suggest that the plugs 26 are connected to the pins 130. However, even if one assumes that the plugs 26 disclosed in Figure 2 are plugged into the pins 130 as disclosed in Figure 3, Maue et al still neither disclose nor suggest the present invention as claimed in claim 11. Maue et al neither disclose nor suggest the electrical leads being connected directly to the pins as in the present claimed invention. In fact, Maue et al disclose the electrical leads 80 are directly connected to the plug element 26, which may be plugged onto the pins 130. This is unlike the present claimed invention wherein, as is clearly stated in claim 11 and on pages 4-5 of the specification, a plug part 12 having a contact pin 13 is attached to the carrier 10 and that an end of the electrical lead 15 is wound around the contact pint 13.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present claimed invention is not anticipated by Maue et al.

As claims 12-13, 16, 18-20, 21 and 25 are dependent upon allowable claim 11, it is respectfully submitted that claims 12-13, 16, 18-20, 21 and 25 are allowable for the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 11. Thus, it is further respectfully submitted that this rejection has been satisfied and should be withdrawn.

Claims 11-13, 15-21 and 25 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Viertel et al (US 5,203,623) on the grounds set forth in the Office Action.

Viertel et al disclose a frame which could be identified as an "instrument panel" (see Figure 2). Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's interpretation of Viertel et al. Specifically, the Examiner states that the carrier is the plastic body of the visor and the microswitch and the further identified the microswitch 29 as an electronic component. If the microswitch 29 is intended to be the electronic component than microswitch 29 is both the electronic component and the carrier. According to the features of claim 11 of the present invention, the electronic component is arranged on a carrier. This carrier may be only a part of the instrument panel. The "carrier" according to Figure 2 of Viertel et al therefore do not have "protruding contact pins" but only a plastic holder 28. Applicant is unclear why the Examiner views the microswitch 29 as a "carrier" with "protruding pins" as the description clearly discloses that the microswitch is an electronic component (see column 2, lines 43-66). Furthermore, according to Viertel et al, the microswitch 29 (electrical component), has the "protruding contact pins", not the "carrier" as in the present claimed invention. Viertel et al neither disclose nor suggest having the

electrical leads attached to the contact pins as in the present claimed invention.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present claimed invention is not anticipated by VierTEL et al. As claims 12-13, 15-21 and 25 are dependent upon allowable claim 11, it is respectfully submitted that claims 12-13, 15-21 and 25 are allowable for the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 11. Thus, it is further respectfully submitted that this rejection has been satisfied and should be withdrawn.

Claims 11-13, 18-23 and 25 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Ha (US 5,584,208) for the reasons stated in the Office Action.

Ha discloses a "motor vehicle" with an "instrument panel 39". The "electronic components 20" are arranged on the "instrument panel 39". Thus, the instrument panel is analogous to the carrier of the present claimed invention. Electrical leads 22 in Ha are attached to the electronic components 20. From looking at Figure 1 of Ha, it may be possible to see "protruding contact pins". However, unlike the present claimed invention, the pins in Ha protrude from the electronic component 20. Ha neither discloses nor suggests the pins protruding from the carrier as in the present claimed invention. As the instrument panel 39 of Ha is analogous to the carrier of the present claimed invention, it is clear that the instrument panel 39 of Ha does not have any contact pins.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present claimed invention is not anticipated by Ha. As

claims 12-13, 18-23 and 25 are dependent upon allowable claim 11, it is respectfully submitted that claims 12-13, 18-23 and 25 are allowable for the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 11. Thus, it is further respectfully submitted that this rejection has been satisfied and should be withdrawn.

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over VierTEL et al (US 5,203,623) on the grounds set forth in the Office Action.

The Examiner states that it would have been obvious to include winding the electrical lead ends around the contact pins. However, VierTEL et al neither disclose nor suggest having the contact pins protruding from the carrier as in the present claimed invention. Nor does VierTEL et al disclose or suggest having the electrical leads attached to the contact pins as in the present claimed invention.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that VierTEL et al adds nothing that would make the present claimed invention unpatentable. As claim 14 is dependent upon allowable claim 11, it is respectfully submitted that claim 14 is allowable for the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 11. Thus, it is further respectfully submitted that this rejection has been satisfied and should be withdrawn.

In the Advisory Action of 10/30/03 directed only to applicant's Amendment Upon Final Rejection filed October 7, 2003, the Examiner indicated that claim 24, but not the other claims, would be allowable. In a telephone call to the Examiner, the Examiner

indicated that his then present opinion was the same as that set forth in the Final Rejection Office Action dated July 22, 2003.

It is believed that claim 11 sets forth a novel invention, which is not shown in nor suggested by the figures of the cited art of Maue, Viertel and Ha.

In accordance with the principles of this invention as set forth in the present specification, pins are placed on the carrier in locations which permit automatic wiring machinery to extend wires between pins of the carrier. Various ones of the pins connect with plug parts, held by the carrier at positions in which the plug parts of the carrier can mate with corresponding plug parts of components carried by the carrier.

To demonstrate this construction of the invention, there is presented new claim 26 that is similar to claim 11, but states specifically that each of the electrical leads is attached to and extends between two of the contact pins. This statement may be implied by the language of claim 11, and is specifically stated in new claim 27, which states that the electrical lead is an electric wire stretched between its two contact pins.

In the rejection of claim 17, the Examiner relies on Viertel to teach plastic foam for insulation of electric wires. But no foam is mentioned in Viertel and, furthermore, loose wires, as shown in Viertel, cannot be insulated by a layer of foam because the wires might touch each other. Such wires must be held taut and spaced apart in order to be insulated by a layer of foam. Accordingly, claim 28 calls for the layers of foam.

Also claim 29 states that the electrical leads are on a side of the carrier facing the component(s) since this feature was considered novel in claim 24 by the Examiner.

In the event there are further issues remaining in any respect the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone attorney to reach agreement to expedite issuance of this application.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Since the present claims set forth the present invention patentably and distinctly, and are not taught by the cited art either taken alone or in combination, this amendment is believed to place this case in condition for allowance and the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the matter, enter this amendment, and to allow all of the claims in this case.

Respectfully submitted,
Winfried MOLL

by: _____

MARTIN A. FARBER
Attorney for Applicant
Registered Representative
Registration No. 22,345

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that the accompanying Supplemental Amendment Upon Final Rejection is being facsimile transmitted to the Patent Office on November 18, 2003.

Signed by Martin A. Farber

Dated: November 18, 2003

866 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
(212) 758-2878